

Press release: Minister for Africa calls for promises of peace in South Sudan to be put into action

Minister for Africa Harriett Baldwin has called for the international community to work together to ensure that South Sudan's peace agreement leads to genuine change for the people of South Sudan.

At the UN General Assembly in New York, Mrs Baldwin met with regional and international leaders, brought together by US Under Secretary of State David Hale. They agreed to work together to tackle the many risks and challenges that lie ahead in the implementation of the peace agreement.

Mrs Baldwin also pushed for progress on delivering humanitarian assistance in South Sudan's high risk environment. The Minister stressed the need for innovative and adaptive responses to the protracted crisis in South Sudan and an open and honest dialogue about the challenges the international community faces. She also called on the Government of South Sudan to make good on its commitments to allow unimpeded humanitarian access, in what is now the most dangerous operating environment for humanitarian workers in the world.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development Minister Harriett Baldwin said:

The peace agreement signed a few weeks ago brought hope to millions of South Sudanese who have suffered the devastating consequences of conflict for far too long. This is a significant achievement, but only the first step on a long journey to peace, and even since the most recent ceasefire, violence continues.

This week, the international community has committed to tackling a culture of impunity. We are also committed to working together to face the growing number of unacceptable obstructions to the delivery of aid, including disproportionate taxes and fees which divert tens of millions of dollars, and violence against aid workers. Those who perpetuate the suffering of South Sudanese people will be held to account.

A peace agreement for South Sudan was signed on 12 September 2018. A recent study estimates that the conflict has caused 380,000 deaths and forced a third of the population to flee their homes. The violence is driving the largest refugee crisis in Africa and a man-made humanitarian catastrophe. Despite progress made in peace talks, food insecurity is at its worst in South Sudan's seven year history and violations of the most recent ceasefire continues. At least 110 humanitarian workers have been killed since the conflict began and 13 this year alone.

The UK continues to work with the region and the international community to push for effective monitoring and implementation of the peace agreement and to hold those undermining it to account. On 13 July, the UK played a leading role in securing a UN arms embargo and targeted sanctions on South Sudan.

The UK is also providing lifesaving aid. Last year we reached over 420,000 people with food assistance and over 680,000 people with access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation facilities. We also deploy over 300 troops as UN peacekeepers to provide important engineering and medical assistance to the UN Mission in South Sudan.

Notes to Editors:

- Minister Baldwin attended the panel event “Delivering Assistance in a High Risk Environment: A Spotlight on South Sudan” hosted by Mark Lowcock, the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator on 25 September.
- She attended the event “Next Steps on the Path to Peace in South Sudan” hosted by US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs David Hale on 26 September.

Further information

[News story: Whitley Bay seaweed business eyes new international markets](#)

- a Whitley Bay-based brand of edible seaweed products has found success overseas after encountering strong global demand for its unique products
- founded by marine biologist and wild-seaweed harvester Dr Craig Rose in 2014, Seaweed & Co. harvests and mills Hebridean seaweed for the industrial food and drink sector
- it also produces a range of seaweed-infused cooking oils and nutritional supplements, under its ‘Weed & Wonderful’ brand

Its products have also been a success in celebrity circles, with Kaiser Chiefs frontman Ricky Wilson using Seaweed & Co.’s PureSea smoked Scottish seaweed in his savoury scones on this year’s The Great Celebrity Bake Off.

Milled Hebridean seaweed for the industrial food and drink sector.

Since it started exporting three years ago, the company’s overseas sales now account for 15% of its turnover, and it sells its milled seaweed ingredients to customers as far afield as South Korea, Australia, Canada, Israel and the United States, as well as across the European Union. Most recently, the

company secured a £10,000 order for its 'PureSea' brand milled seaweed from a food manufacturer in Spain.

The business is now working with International Trade Advisers from the Department for International Trade (DIT) to boost its presence in the Scandinavian and US markets.

Ongoing support for the company comes as part of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and DIT's Food is GREAT campaign, which aims to get more food and drink producers into key overseas markets.

Seaweed from Whitley Bay.

Later this month, the business will be showcasing its Weed & Wonderful range to Danish buyers as part of a DIT-sponsored trade 'Meet the buyer' mission to Copenhagen, Denmark.

Dr Craig Rose, Founder and CEO, Seaweed & Co., said:

Exporting has been part of our business strategy from the very beginning. There is a huge market out there, and by working with distributors and partners overseas we've been able to increase our profitability and boost our resilience.

There is an increasing awareness of the health benefits from eating seaweed, and there's a growing demand for our products as a direct result. Although people still raise their eyebrows when they find out we sell seaweed, markets such as Scandinavia, where consumers are relatively health conscious, hold potential for serious growth. Although exporting has been a huge boost to the business, it's not without its challenges. Thankfully DIT has been on hand to help with guidance in completing the right export paperwork and navigating international regulations. They even were able to help us avoid being scammed after we were contacted by what looked like a genuine overseas customer.

I'd encourage anyone thinking about exporting to get in touch with DIT at the earliest possibility. David Coppock, DIT North East Regional Head, said: "Seaweed & Co. is an example of a local firm that has been quick to capitalise on a growing international trend with health-conscious consumers, with its highly versatile product.

We know that exporting can sometimes present hurdles, which is why DIT is on hand to offer our support. Our network of International Trade Advisers based on the ground across the North East can offer firms of all sizes advice on everything from logistics and tax to language and intellectual property, as well as help businesses access funding for missions abroad. I'd encourage anyone interested in exporting to get in touch.

[Press release: UK government and Bloomberg L.P. announce partnership to promote and improve reporting on gender equality in the workplace](#)

The UK's Minister for Women and Equalities, the Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP, and Founder of Bloomberg L.P. and Bloomberg Philanthropies, Michael R. Bloomberg, today announced a new partnership between the UK Government and Bloomberg L.P. to improve reporting and transparency around gender equality in the workplace.

Speaking at the Bloomberg [Global Business Forum](#) in New York, Mordaunt and Bloomberg outlined a shared commitment to incorporate six data points from the [UK Government's gender pay gap](#) metrics into the global reporting framework of the [Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index \(GEI\)](#).

UK Minister for Women and Equalities, Penny Mordaunt said:

This partnership with Bloomberg shows the growing global commitment to transparency and gender equality at work. Some of our biggest UK companies like Barclays, BT, Deloitte and Sky have already taken action, showing that gender equality is not just a moral imperative, it is good business.

Every human endeavour depends upon inclusion. So that we can all thrive in the workplace, no matter who we are.

Founder of Bloomberg L.P. and Bloomberg Philanthropies, Michael R. Bloomberg said:

I want to thank the U.K. for its partnership and great work ensuring women and men have equal opportunities. This index highlights companies that are leading the way in addressing gender disparities – and what steps they are taking to do that – which can set an example for others.

Since 2016, the Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index has provided investors with standardized, comparable data on a range of social factors related to gender equality in the workplace. The 2018 GEI includes 104 companies headquartered in 24 countries and regions.

Companies that have demonstrated their support of the GEI and a commitment to

disclosure include: Anheuser-Busch InBev, Bank of America, Barclays, BNP Paribas, Ford Motor Company, Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan Chase & Co., Mastercard, Pearson and Unilever.

Eligible companies are scored based on data available in public filings and additional information collected through 67 questions as part of the GEI survey, a comprehensive overview of company statistics, employee policies, external engagement and gender-conscious product offerings.

Beginning in 2019, the GEI survey will incorporate six data points from the UK Government's pay gap methodology, including the percentage of men and women in each quartile of payroll, and median and mean gender pay gap. First implemented in 2017, the introduction of new rules mandated organizations of a certain size to disclose employee pay statistics. Initial results illustrate the scale of the challenge, with 3 in 4 company reports indicating men are paid more than women.

In addition, Bloomberg L.P and the UK Government will work together to:

- Improve transparency on a global scale and build consensus with companies around the key metrics and drivers of gender equality in an organization;
- Create a clear measure for investors, consumers and employees to evaluate gender equality;
- Improve transparency of gender equality data on a global scale;
- Promote and expand membership of the Gender-Equality Index as an instrumental tool to transform economic gender equality.

Kiersten Barnet, Manager, Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index, said:

This partnership is an encouraging step towards higher levels of gender equality disclosure and accountability. While gender pay is just one of the issues to overcome in the fight for parity, offering employers a standardized framework to measure their progress reduces the burden of reporting and creates a common global language for discussing gender equality.

Jean-Laurent Bonnafé, Director and Chief Executive Officer of BNP Paribas, said:

Gender equality is at the heart of BNP Paribas' company engagement strategy. All the management team at BNP Paribas is fully committed to fighting gender bias. Large companies can contribute to a better world by taking HR decisions that push the boundaries. They can also have a strong influence through their business decisions. Data is essential to help them measure and accelerate their progress in gender equality.

David Solomon, President and COO of Goldman Sachs, said:

A diverse workforce across all dimensions is essential to our ability to best serve our clients. We are committed to increasing the representation of women at every level of the firm and are pleased to support the UK Government and Bloomberg's joint mission to encourage greater transparency around gender equality in the workplace, and to help us measure our progress.

Notes to Editors

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About Bloomberg

Bloomberg, the global business and financial information and news leader, gives influential decision makers a critical edge by connecting them to a dynamic network of information, people and ideas. The company's strength – delivering data, news and analytics through innovative technology, quickly and accurately – is at the core of the Bloomberg Terminal. Bloomberg's enterprise solutions build on the company's core strength: leveraging technology to allow customers to access, integrate, distribute and manage data and information across organizations more efficiently and effectively.

About Mandatory UK Gender Pay Gap Reporting

The UK Government introduced world leading, mandatory gender pay gap reporting for large employers in 2017. The requirements provide an unparalleled level of transparency. Organisations with 250 or more employees need to publish 14 separate data points on gender pay differences each year. The first year of reporting saw an unprecedented level of compliance and 100% of organisations in scope have reported. Reporting on such a wide range of measures helps employers to understand the causes of the gender pay differences in their own workforces and encourages them to take action.

Live gender pay gap data, for the more than 10,000 employers that have reported, is easily accessible via the Government's gender pay gap reporting website. The reporting website has been highly acclaimed for the transparency it provides and has attracted interest from across the globe.

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News story: “Enterprise and entrepreneurship is transforming the Scottish economy”, says Liz Truss

- During her visit, she will appear in front of the Scottish Parliament’s Finance and Constitution Committee to discuss devolved finance powers and hold talks with the Scottish Government Finance Secretary Derek Mackay on their shared interest in growing the Scottish economy
- She will also tour businesses and outline the next steps in the Moray Growth Deal
Chief Secretary to the Treasury Liz Truss will visit Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Peterhead this week (26 – 28 September) to meet businesses and discuss Scotland’s thriving economy.

Liz Truss said:

Scotland’s brilliant enterprise and entrepreneurship is helping to transform the Scottish economy.

For example, I’ll see for myself the maritime services revamping the oil and gas industry in Aberdeen, learn how technology is making Scottish whisky production in Moray even better, and visit Codebase, the UKs largest tech incubator to see the work they helping start-up businesses.

The UK government is committed to supporting Scotland’s growth and helping unleash its talent by giving Holyrood more powers and Scottish cities and regions more freedom to run their local economies.

While in Scotland, Liz Truss will:

- Tour Codebase in Edinburgh, the UKs largest technology incubator hosting 100 tech firms
- Visit Aberdeen and Peterhead, where she will meet businesses from diverse industries such as food and drink exporting and energy logistics

The Chief Secretary will complete the visit in Moray, where she will outline the next steps in the Moray Growth Deal by inviting local councils and businesses the chance to submit plans to government on their priorities for

boosting economic growth and productivity.

This deal forms part of the government's City and Growth Deals, through which more than £1 billion has been invested directly into Scotland.

Every city in Scotland either has a city deal or is in negotiations for a deal that gives local areas the tools and resources they need to kick-start growth and regeneration.

The UK government is helping Scottish families keep more money in their pocket for the things that matter to them. For example, we have cut income tax for 2.4 million people and our fuel duty freeze is saving the average motorist £130 each year.

Scottish companies are also being supported expand and reach new markets across the world through UK government new Foreign Direct Investment projects. In 2017/18 these projects created more than 4,000 jobs in Scotland.